

October 14, 2009

STATEWIDE CRIME STATISTICS RELEASED

BISMARCK – Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem today released North Dakota's crime statistics for 2008, which show that overall, the state's crime rate per capita increased by 2.3% from 2007. The report is compiled from information reported by local law enforcement agencies across the state.

"The overall crime rate in North Dakota remains one of the lowest in the nation. That is good news. The state will continue its status as one of the nation's safest states, and that is further good news," said Stenehjem. "As the statistics show, however, there are areas of concern. Chief among them is the continuing upward trend in violent crimes, including rape and aggravated assault, which increased significantly in 2008," he continued.

Crime index offenses increased by 2.5%, with 12,850 offenses reported by local law enforcement, compared to 12,532 reported in 2007. Crime index offenses include the violent crimes of murder/non-negligent manslaughter, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, and property crimes such as burglary, theft, shoplifting, and motor vehicle theft. Violent crimes comprise 8.1% of the total index crimes reported in North Dakota, one of the lowest rates in the nation.

- The number of violent crimes reported in 2008 increased by 16.8% from 2007, to 1,035.
- Reports of aggravated assault increased by 23.2% last year, from 599 in 2007 to 738. By definition, aggravated assault involves serious bodily injury to the victim. Since 1999, reports of aggravated assault have increased by 240%.
- The number of forcible rapes increased by almost 10% last year, from 202 in 2007 to 222 in 2008. Forcible rape involves violence or the threat of violence against a female victim.

Four murders occurred in 2008, the lowest since statewide crime reporting started in 1978. In 2007, there were 17 murders. For the first time in thirty years of the Crime Report, none of the victims died as a result of domestic violence. Two of the victims were children, including a newborn infant. Three victims were male.

Property crime accounted for 91.9% of crime index offenses reported. The number of property crimes increased by 1.5 percent in 2008, with 11,815 reported compared to 11,646 in 2007. Juveniles were arrested for 41.2% of the property crimes. Motor vehicle thefts decreased by 2.7% with 854 reported in 2008 compared to 878 in 2007. More than \$12 million dollars worth of property was reported stolen in 2008.

The state also tracks and reports drug and alcohol offenses, which are not crime index offenses. The number of arrests for all alcohol related offenses decreased, with 11,407 arrests in 2008 compared to 12,203 in 2007, but still accounts for almost 40% of total

arrests in North Dakota. DUI arrests decreased by 4.4% to 5,815 in 2008 compared to 6,085 in 2007, but still accounted for one-fourth (25.2%) of all adults arrested in 2008. Juveniles accounted for 22.5% of total arrests and 38.3% of crime index offense arrests.

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Read the 2008 Crime Report at: <http://www.ag.nd.gov/Reports/BCIReports/CrimeHomicide/Crime08.pdf>

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